

17 Sunday OT B 2018

July 27

Frazeo/Callaway

Jesus said to Philip, "Where can we buy enough food for them to eat?"

The question unsettled Philip. I think it scared him. We know that Jesus and his apostles were living in a small community. They had a joint fund for money. Judas was the treasurer.

On hearing Jesus' suggestion to BUY food, I can imagine Philip staring at Judas and mouthing the words, "How much money do we have?" Judas didn't need to count the money in the pouch. He knew it was a little more than 200 days wages. Philip and Judas understood each other. This was an outrageous idea, and they would have none of it. Philip understood his job—to convince Jesus that a hungry crowd was not their problem.

Philip was a master of misdirection. Jesus wanted to know where to buy food. Philip responded, "We don't have enough money." Where and how are two different questions. Jesus asked WHERE can we buy food?

Let's not be like this. When Jesus asks a question, let's respond to his question. The alternative is to respond from our fears and insecurities.

I can imagine Jesus asking a question in the hearts of our ancestors. "Where can we build a church?" Philip would have responded, "Are you crazy? We don't have ENOUGH money to build a church." Fears and insecurities accomplish one thing: they limit the power of God.

If we are not careful, we can respond to God in the same way. I think the Holy Spirit prompts us to do God's will every day. Just like Philip, we can respond out of our anxieties and doubts; or we can actually talk with Jesus and allow his power to be manifested in us and through us.

Andrew stepped up. He answered the question Jesus asked. "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish."

Imagine the relief Philip and Judas felt when Jesus instructed them to buy food from the boy. It's ONLY five loaves and a couple of fish. With this small and totally manageable purchase, they must have concluded that Jesus had abandoned his big ideas. The bread and fish would be set aside for a snack after they ditched the crowd.

And then Jesus manifested the power of God for them. The hungry would be fed. The sheep would not be abandoned by the shepherd. The apostles would be instructed, AGAIN, to trust in their Lord.

The Mother of Jesus asked Juan Diego to build a church. His YES was a virtual ground breaking for today's Basilica that seats 10,000 people.

Jesus asked Mother Teresa to feed the hungry and comfort the dying. Her YES unleashed the most powerful ministry of compassion the world has ever seen.

This is not a motivational talk. It is a witness to faith. When Jesus asks us to do something, let's never do the math. If our first response is to check the balance to our checking account, then we have already failed in faithfulness. We will be overwhelmed by the vision of God, and we will deny God the power to accomplish his will in and through us.

To say YES is not as scary as living in prisons of *no's* and *maybe's*. To say YES is freedom! To say YES is to admit to the power of God. It is a front row seat to miracles.